

# Mr. Turner

Director: Mike Leigh  
2014 (144')



In Mr. Turner, the director Mike Leigh explores the last quarter century of the life of J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851), the single-minded artist considered one of the most brilliant landscape painters to have ever lived.

Mr. Turner is a mighty work of critical imagination, a loving, unsentimental portrait of a rare creative soul. New York Times

Mr. Turner is funny, humane and visually immaculate, hitting its confident stride straight away. *It combines domestic*

*intimacy with an epic sweep, and a lyrical gentleness pervades each scene, tragic or comic.* The Guardian

*Mike Leigh's biopic is a rambling, richly detailed character study with a magnificent central performance from Timothy Spall.* The Independent

## Vocabulary and expressions:

**You faring well?:** Are you well?/How are you?

**Vexed:** Angry; annoyed

*I was vexed to learn you've been entertaining concerns, old Dadda.*

**To top up a drink:** To fill someone's glass up with, e.g., tea or wine or beer.

*I'll top up your ale, Mr. Mallard.*

**To fish for compliments:** To try to get compliments from others

*Now, you be fishing for compliments, and my old Ma used to say, them that fish for compliments don't get none.*

## Short Chronology:

### 1775

23 April: Joseph Mallard William Turner born, 21 Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, London.

## **1786**

Stays at Margate, where he attends school; earliest drawings.

## **1787**

First signed and dated drawings; his father displays his work at his barber's shop.

## **1800**

27 December: his mother is admitted to Bethlem Hospital for the insane.

## **1802**

12 February: elected Royal Academician.

15 July–October: tours France, Savoy and Switzerland and spends three weeks in Paris, studying pictures in the Louvre.

## **1804**

15 April: his mother dies, probably at Bethlem Hospital.

## **1829**

21 September: his father dies.

## **1832**

Regular visits to Margate, Kent, to stay with his landlady, Mrs Booth.

## **1845**

20 February: made Acting President of the Royal Academy during the illness of Martin Archer Shee. June: Shee resigns and Turner is reappointed to December 1846. Makes two last visits to the Continent.

Following various illnesses, Turner's health breaks down this year.

## **1846**

His health still declining, he moves with Mrs Booth and her son Daniel Pound to 6 Davis Place, Cremorne Road, Chelsea, leaving his decaying London house and gallery in the care of his housekeeper.

## **1851**

By October is bed-bound at Davis Place, attended by doctors and cared for by Mrs Booth.

19 December: 10 a.m., he dies at Davis Place. His body is taken to Queen Anne Street where it is placed in Turner's Gallery.

30 December: he is buried in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral.

## **Lines from the film:**

**Gillot:** I like to spend my money on things that give me pleasure. And your pictures give me much pleasure. I want them, all of them.

**Turner:** Sir... with a modicum of regret and somewhat of a heavy heart, I'm

sorry to say 'tis out of the question.

**Gillot:** How so?

**Turner:** They are bequeathed.

**Gillot:** Bequeathed? To whom?

**Turner:** To the British nation, sir.

**Dr Price:** My dear Turner, I am obliged to inform you that your condition is grave. Your days are numbered, and if you have affairs to attend to in this world you should do so now and prepare yourself for the next.

**Turner:** Dr Price, with the utmost respect, may I suggest you take yourself downstairs to Mrs. Booth, avail yourself of a large glass of sherry, come back up here and reassess your opinion.

**Dr Price:** No, sir, I'm afraid I shan't be doing that.

**Turner:** So I'm to become a nonentity.

**Turner:** The Sun is God!

He laughs... And then he dies.

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